

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 091100

FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG

FOLLOWING REPEAT BEIRUT 1966 ACTION SECSTATE INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER COMSIXTHFLT CTF SIX ZERO CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN DIA WASHDC CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT APRIL 6.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1966

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION, APRIL 7, 1300 LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 1906 (DTG 050955Z APR 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. PALESTINIANS AMBUSHED AN ISRAELI
JEEP. ISRAELIS PREVENTED LEBANESE GENDARMES FROM TAKING UP
POSITIONS AT QA'QA'IYAT BRIDGE. A FRENCH BOAT ARRIVED WITH
SUPPLIES FOR UNIFIL. SALAH KHALAF SAID PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT ALLOW
UNIFIL TO STOP PALESTINIAN OPERATIONS AGAINST THE ISRAELIS.
WAFADISAVOWED ASSERTION BY ABU NIDAL THAT FEDAYEEN WOULD ATTACK
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UNIFIL. ICRC REPORTEDLY FOUND THAT 80 PERCENT OF SOUTHERN TOWNS
WERE DAMAGED DURING ISRAELI INVASION. SOVIET DIPLOMAT CONFIRMED
THAT SOVIET UNION SUPPORTED PALESTINIAN COMMANDOS WHO REFUSED TO
TURN OVER THEIR POSITIONS IN SOUTH LEBANON TO UNIFIL. HOUSE
SPEAKER ASSAD REPORTEDLY CLASHED WITH IRAQI AMBASSADOR OVER
IRAQI REINFORCEMENTS TO PALESTINIANS. END SUMMARY

2. MILITARY SITUATION.

A. SPORADIC SHOOTING AND SHELLING CONTINUED IN SOUTH LEBANON.

B. IN THE MOST SERIOUS INCIDENT SINCE THE MARCH 21 CEASEFIRE WAS DECLARED, PALESTINIANS AMBUSHED AN ISRAELI JEEP WHICH HAD STRAYED INSIDE FEDAYEEN-HELD TERRITORY AT RAS AL AIN, ABOUT SEVEN KILOMETERS SOUTH OF TYRE. ACCORDING TO A PALESTINIAN SPOKESMAN, FOUR SOLDIERS WERE KILLED AND ONE WAS CAPTURED ALIVE. ACCORDING TO AN ISRAELI STATEMENT, SEVEN SOLDIERS WERE IN THE JEEP - THREE WERE KILLED, TWO WERE WOUNDED, TWO HAD RETURNED TO ISRAEL, AND TWO WERE MISSING. ABOUT 100 FRENCH U.N. TROOPS MOUNTED A SEARCH OPERATION FOR ISRAELI SURVIVORS, BUT FOUND NONE.

3. UNIFIL ACTIVITIES.

ON APRIL 5, THE 18 CANADIAN SIGNALMEN SERVING WITH UNIFIL LEFT COUNTRY AND WERE REPLACED BY NORWEGIANS. A FRENCH MILITARY VESSEL ON APRIL 6 BROUGHT 80 ADDITIONAL FRENCH TROOPS AND 35 VEHICLES OF VARIOUS TYPES TO BEIRUT FOR UNIFIL ON APRIL 6. AFP REPORTED THAT FRENCH BRIGADIER-GENERAL JEAN CUQ HAS BEEN NAMED DEPUTY COMMANDER OF UNIFIL AND THAT MEXICO HAD WITHDRAWN ITS OFFER TO SUPPLY TROOPS TO LEBANON.

4. GENDARMES BLOCKED.

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THE ISRAELIS ON APRIL 6 BLOCKED A SMALL CONTINGENT OF LEBANESE GENDARMES FROM TAKING UP POSITION AT QA'QA'IYAT BRIDGE. ACCORDING TO THE LOCAL PRESS. IKE QUOTED AN ISRAELI SPOKESMAN AS SAYING THAT THE GENDARMES HAD BEEN STOPPED BECAUSE THEIR PAPERS WERE NOT IN ORDER, BUT THAT THE GENDARMES WOULD PROBABLY BE ALLOWED TO PROCEED IN A FEW DAYS.

5. SALAF KHALAF TALKS TOUGH.

IN AN INTERVIEW GIVEN TO ZURICH NEWSPAPER TAGES ANZEIGER, FATAH OFFICIAL SALAF KHALAF SAID IT WOULD BE "PREMATURE TO DESCRIBE ALL OF OUR SO-CALLED ARAB ALLIES AS PAPER TIGERS, BUT THEIR ATTITUDE AND THEIR SUPPORT CERTAINLY DID NOT LIVE UP TO OUR EXPECTATIONS." HE WARNED THAT "WE COULD MOBILIZE THE MASSES FROM MOROCCO TO BAGHDAD AND MAKE THEM SO RESTIVE THAT THE ESTABLISHED REGIMES WOULD BE DWARFS, AND WE DO NOT ONLY FIGHT AGAINST ISRAEL."

IN A VEILED REFERENCE TO UNIFIL, KHALAF SAID: "NO ONE CAN PREVENT US FROM RETURNING TO OUR SOUTH LEBANESE BASES AND POSITIONS AS LONG AS THE (CAIRO AND RIYADH) AGREEMENTS ARE IN FORCE. WE WILL NOT CEASE TO FIGHT OUR ISRAELI ENEMIES. NO ONE SHOULD TRY TO DENY THIS TO US AND TO FORCE THE PLO TO SIT STILL."

6. ABU NIDAL INTERVIEW

Wafa on April 6 however disavowed an interview of Abu Nidal published April 5 in the Swiss newspaper "24 Heures," in which he said that Palestinians would attack UNIFIL forces. Wafa said that "the so-called Abu Nidal no longer has any relation with the Palestinian revolution," and has been "excluded from Fatah for several years."

7. Southern towns damaged.

According to Reuter on April 6, the ICRC has prepared a survey showing that eight out of ten towns and villages in South Lebanon
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were damaged during the Israeli invasion last month. The ICRC reportedly found that 82 villages had been damaged and six almost totally destroyed.

8. Soviet positions.

In a conversation with PAO on April 5, Soviet Second Secretary described as accurate press reports that Soviet Union supported Palestinian commanders who refused to turn over their positions in South Lebanon to UNIFIL (see April 4 SITREP.).

Soviet Ambassador Soldatov on April 6, after meeting with the Secretary-General of the Foreign Ministry, demanded immediate Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon and the deployment of U.N. troops along the entire Lebanese-Israeli border.

9. Iraqi views.

House Speaker Kamal al Assad and Iraqi Ambassador Kassem al-Samaoui held an acrimonious meeting on April 4, according to the Phalangist Lebanese news agency. Assad reportedly told al-Samaoui that the presence of Iraqi combatants in South Lebanon obstructed the mission of UNIFIL. On April 6, after meeting with Prime Minister al Hoss, al-Samaoui told reporters that the furor over Iraqi volunteers in South Lebanon was "artificial, arranged by quarters with vested interests."

10. Syrian-Lebanese police altercation in Beirut.

Syrian ADF soldiers and Lebanese police clashed in a fire fight shortly after midnight on April 7 in front of a Lebanese police station in the Hamra area. There were no reported casualties. The cause of the clash remains unknown. Bour bullets
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STRUCK THE EMBASSY.
PARKER UNQUOTE VANCE

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